

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 13-19, 23, 24, and 27-35 are pending in the application, with claims 13, 23 and 33 being the independent claims.

Claims 1-9 and 11-12 are sought to be cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. Claims 13-16 and 19 are sought to be amended to include allowable subject matter similar to claim 23. Claims 10, 20-22, 25, and 26 were previously cancelled. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute similar or broader claims, with respect to the cancelled claims, in the future. New claims 29-35, comprising subject matter similar to the currently cancelled claims 8, 12, 13, 15, and 19, and from allowable claims 23, 24, and 27, are sought to be added. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Applicants seek to enter these amendments after final rejection because they require no further search or consideration by the examiner, as all the new claims depend from an allowed claim, or include subject matter similar to the allowed claim, and place the application in condition for allowance.

Based on the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Telephone Interview Summary

Applicants' representatives thank the Examiner for his time for a telephone interview at 2:00 P.M. on March 20, 2008. Applicants also appreciate the Examiner's

provisional agreement that the claims as amended above are allowable over the cited references.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

On page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-5, 9, 13-16, and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Great Britain Patent No. GB 2,321,316 to Hashimoto (hereinafter "Hashimoto") in view of U.S. Patent 5,117,255 to Shiraishi *et al.* (hereinafter "Shiraishi"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Without acquiescing to the Examiner's statements of rejection, and merely to expedite prosecution, Applicants have cancelled claims 1-5 and 9 rendering this rejection moot.

Claim 13, as amended, recites features similar to allowable claim 23. Accordingly claims 13, and its dependent claims should be found allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 23, and further in view of their own distinguishing features.

On page 3 of the Office Action, claims 6-8, 17, and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Hashimoto in view of Shiraishi as applied to claim 1 and 13 above, and further in view of U.S. Pub. No. 2004/0012404 of Feder *et al.* (hereinafter "Feder"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Without acquiescing to the Examiner's statements of rejection, and merely to expedite prosecution, Applicants have cancelled claims 6-8 rendering this rejection moot.

Claims 17 and 18 depend from claim 13 and incorporate all features thereof, in addition to their own distinguishing features. Accordingly, claims 17 and 18 should be found allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 13 presented above, and further, in view of their own distinguishing features.

Allowable Subject Matter and New Claims 29-35

Applicants note with appreciation, the Examiner's indication of allowability of claims 23, 24, 27, and 28.

Applicants note the Examiner's statement of reasons for allowance presented on page 3 of the Office Action. Applicants reserve the right to demonstrate claims 23, 24, 27, and 28 are allowable over the art made of record for further reasons related to any of their recited features. Applicants further contend that reservation of this right does not give rise to any implication regarding whether the Applicants agree with or acquiesces in the reasoning provided by the Examiner in the Examiner's statement of reasons for allowance.

Claims 29-35 are currently sought to be entered. Claims 29-35 recite subject matter similar to claims 8, 12, 13, 15, 19, and allowable claims 23, 24, and 27, in addition to their own distinguishing features. Claims 29-32 depend from claim 23, which is found allowable, as presented above. New claim 33, and its dependent claims, recite an apparatus performing steps recited in allowable method claim 23. Accordingly, claims 29-35 should also be found allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 23 and its allowable depended claims 24, 27, and 28, and further in view of their own distinguishing features.

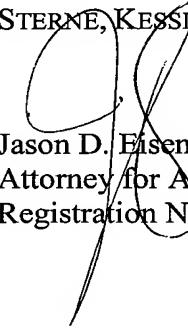
Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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